

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - July 28, 2006

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced that Oscar Antonio Ortiz, a former United States Border Patrol Agent, was sentenced today in federal District Court in San Diego by the Honorable John A. Houston to serve 60 months in custody. Ortiz was convicted of conspiracy to smuggle aliens and three other felonies related to his own status as an illegal alien. Ortiz must also pay a \$400 special assessment. Ortiz will likely be deported after serving his sentence.

On January 26, 2006, Ortiz pleaded guilty to conspiracy to smuggle aliens into the United States, false claim to United States citizenship, false statement in the acquisition of a firearm, and being an illegal alien in possession of a firearm. According to court documents, Ortiz conspired with another Border Patrol agent to smuggle aliens into the United States through their area of responsibility at the international border east of the Tecate Port of Entry, while the two were on duty. Ortiz and others were intercepted, pursuant to

court authorized wiretaps, making arrangements to smuggle more than 50 aliens at a time into the United States in April and May of 2005.

At the time of his guilty plea, Ortiz admitted that he conspired to bring into the United States illegally 100 aliens or more. Ortiz also admitted that, on October 30, 2001, in his application to become a United States Border Patrol agent, he falsely indicated that he was a United States citizen, when he was actually a citizen of the Republic of Mexico. He further admitted that, on March 21, 2005, while purchasing a .40 caliber semi-automatic pistol at the El Cajon Gun Exchange, in El Cajon, California, he falsely represented that he was not an alien illegally in the United States.

United States Attorney Lam said, "Ortiz lied his way into the Border Patrol and thought he had free rein once he was inside the agency. He was wrong."

DEFENDANT **Case Number: 05CR1436-JAH**

Oscar Antonio Ortiz

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

False Claim to U.S. Citizenship - Title 18, U.S.C., Section 911

Conspiracy to Bring in Aliens - Title 8, U.S.C., Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(I) and (v)(1)

False Statement in the Acquisition of a Firearm - Title 18, U.S.C., Sections 922(a)(6) and 924(a)(2)

Illegal Alien in Possession of a Firearm - Title 18, U.S.C., Sections 922(g)(5)(A) and 924(a)(2).

AGENCIES

North County Regional Gang Task Force

United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement

San Diego Sheriff's Office

Escondido Police Department

Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General